2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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period. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company's bunkering and installation workers went on strike without serious consequences to anyone. Our really bad labour trouble was to come later.

Government set up a Labour and Welfare Department, and labour ordinances which had lain unenforced for years were brought into reality, much to the disgust of some factory owners whose premises were a danger to their employees and a disgrace to the Colony. So the progress went on, first one problem was tackled and then another, but I believe the working people derived most benefit from the housing schemes which were introduced. The Port Trust led the way in this field with a bold scheme to house the majority of their permanent labour force. I was glad to have been able to initiate that scheme, and I was even better pleased before I left Aden in 1956 to see completed the Government housing scheme at Ma'alla where 1,500 flats had been erected on a very modern housing estate planned primarily for Government employees. Even housing, like the measles, is catching and the major commercial undertakings followed the lead given them and it became usual rather than unusual for most permanent employees to be housed by their employers.

While all this building was going on in Tawahi and Crater, the outskirts of the Colony were not forgotten and Government erected over 1,000 houses at Sheikh Othman to relieve overcrowding.

This is not meant to be just a list of the achievements of Government and employers in the labour field, but an indication of the all-round efforts which were made in a comparatively short space of time to improve the working conditions and the housing of the workers in the Colony, especially those who were the least well provided for financially. All this activity, beneficial though it was, failed in one vital respect. Only in a few exceptional cases was there any real improvement in master and man relations. The employers remained out of touch with their men just when the closest co-operation and understanding was essential. They took little interest in their employees as individuals either inside the

factory or office or in their homes, and there was a sad lack of mutual respect, understanding and consultation. Negotiating machinery in industry, as we understand it in this country, did not exist and efforts made during the first years of my term of office as Governor to persuade Managements to modernise their outlook were largely unavailing. The employers had no federation or co-ordinating authority for their labour relations and labour was leaderless. Up to 1952 there was only one Trade Union in the Colony. Then suddenly Trades Union became fashionable and everyone wanted to have these new toys, with the result that by March 1956 some twenty-five Unions had been registered, the majority of whom had been in existence for only a few months. The Trades Union leaders were mostly young men and were, without exception, inexperienced and in some cases more interested in power than they were in the proper functioning of the Unions. The Unions were mostly House Unions and in their dealings with Managements their leaders often behaved in an ill-mannered and provocative manner and conducted themselves generally like people with an inferiority complex rather out of their depth, which is precisely what they were. One thing the Union leaders had no doubt about was that they would not hesitate to make full use of their new authority. They had not long to wait. At this time strikes were very much in the air literally, with news of labour unrest a feature of practically every radio news broadcast, blared forth in the Colony eating houses and coffee shops. The atmosphere was certainly conducive to strikes, and I am afraid that many of the Trades Union leaders did not view the possibility of their advent with that concern, and indeed dismay, which they would have had they been more experienced and responsible. They had all got their toys and maybe some of the children wanted to wind them up and see what would happen.

The employers, on the other hand, were inexperienced in dealing with Trades Union and resented, often with cause, the attitude of the Trades Union officials. With the exception of the "Shipping Conference" which was composed of representatives of the shipping companies and was mainly concerned

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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with freight rates and stevedoring charges, the employers were disorganised and were, for the most part, in active competition with each other. They were very conscious of the considerable improvements in living and working conditions which had been made by them and they felt that they were entitled to expect, if not the gratitude of their workmen, at least a period of industrial calm free from further demands. They were alarmed at the increase in the number of the Trades Union, which meant only one thing to them and that was more and more and bigger and bigger demands by labour until commercial life became impossible. It seemed quite clear to the majority of the employers that the Unions would have to be fought and brought to their senses or broken, and that this must be done before they became too strong.

Although the continued anti-British broadcasts from Cairo had undoubtedly had their effect on the general atmosphere in the Colony, which the activities of the nationalist National United Front Party had done nothing to improve, labour as a whole was behaving reasonably well. There were, of course, some differences of opinion between individuals and Managements, but the two main labour problems were being dealt with. The first of these problems, which was not in any way extraordinary and concerned shift rates for stevedores, was under discussion between employers and the Labour Department of Government, and a satisfactory settlement was in sight. The second problem was out of the ordinary and was a direct result of the improved housing conditions which many workmen now enjoyed. Put simply the trouble was that the provision of better and modern housing had increased the cost of living of the occupants to a point where, on their wage scales, they could not make both ends meet and were distinctly worse off financially than they had been before the new houses and flats were available. The reason for this curious state of affairs was not increased rent, because although there had been an increase it had been cushioned by subsidisation by Government, the Refinery, the Port Trust and the commercial houses which provided housing for their employees. Previously many of the workmen concerned had been living three or four families

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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362 together in one room, or verandah, or in a scrap-wood and
511 corrugated iron hut on the hillside. They had no washing facilities and used public latrines, and when the kerosene oil in the lamp was exhausted they went to sleep. The new accommodation had running water laid on, a bathroom and water-borne sanitation and electric light. This was as it should be, but this was where the trouble arose because water and electricity in Aden had both to be paid for, and investigation showed that the provision of these necessities increased the workman's monthly expenditure by fifteen per cent. There was also some social rivalry among the families and trying to live up to the Joneses never does reduce expenditure.

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871 Yet another cause of increased expenditure, which was universal and did not apply specifically to the dwellers in the new houses and flats, was that more children were going to school.

In 1921 there were 359 boys in Government schools, by 1948 this had increased to 4,000 boys and girls, and by 1956 no less than 10,000 children were attending Government schools and many more were going to other educational establishments. Primary and Intermediate education were free and even at Aden College and the Technical Institute the boys of poor parents were able to continue their education with Government scholarships, so the trouble was not with school fees. The parents' financial burden was added to because the boys and the girls had to be decently dressed in clean clothes to go to school, instead of wearing any old thing to hang about the town in or run errands.

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[465] The Aden Government and the Refinery Management were alive to the difficulties of their employees and we and they were taking steps to solve the problem by a revision of some of the wage scales to relieve the financial pressure on the less well paid men. If our plans could have been completed before an unfortunate dispute between a Management and Trades Union officials lighted the fuse to set off a chain of strikes, which were exploited by the National United Front for their own ends, it is probable that the trouble when it came, and come it probably would have done in the atmosphere then prevailing in the Colony, would have been quite limited

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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in its extent and the Refinery would not have been directly involved. As it was there was general confusion, with neither side acting rationally. Labour relations, never good, became chaotic with the employers determined to fight anything in the nature of a demand, however reasonable it might be; and many of the Union leaders were equally determined to have a strike, unjustified though it might be. Members of some Unions were brought out on strike before any demands had been put forward by the leaders to the Managements concerned and without any clear idea of why they were striking.

The only measure of agreement there was between the two parties was their condemnation of the conduct of my Government. One side, I leave you to guess which, said that the whole trouble was Communist inspired, or if not actually Communist then the work of the Nationalists which was much the same thing, and anyway the strikes were purely political in cause and conduct, and were not in any way industrial. In their view Government were dreadfully weak and lamentably biased and were doing nothing when they should have been deporting the rascally political leaders disguised as Trades Union officials. They had a great deal more to say, but it all amounted to one thing, that Government was gravely at fault. The opposite party was just as outspoken and did not hesitate to describe Government officials as harsh and the police as overbearing and tyrannical and, in fact, murderers. In their view the workmen were grossly oppressed and there was a distressing lack of sympathy for the downtrodden and so on and so forth. They considered that Government should force the employers to grant every single Union demand, reasonable or unreasonable, simply because it was a Trades Union demand.

In fact, of course, we did everything we could to prevent the strikes and to stop them spreading when once they started. The Labour Commissioner worked day and night to bring the parties together and try and solve their difficulties which were, whatever anyone may say, fundamentally industrial in origin. I, myself, met both sides time and time again, but to no avail. They were beyond rational thought.

At the same time the first essential was to maintain law and

579 order in the Colony, and this was done with the minimum
689 of force by the police supported by the military forces in the Colony. The fact that on two occasions the police were forced to open fire on rioters indicates how serious the situation was. It also indicates our determination to let nothing hinder us in the execution of our duty. Mercifully there were only two or three casualties, one of whom was a schoolboy who was killed by a stray shot while watching a crowd being prevented from storming the Tawahi Police Station in order to release a workman who, very properly, had been arrested. It was a tragic business. Some innocent person almost inevitably suffers on these occasions. I was, by chance, in Tawahi when the boy's funeral procession passed along the road and after it had gone by an elderly man, an Arab, walked up to me and said:

"You are responsible. It was murder."

Emotion had distorted his judgment, poor fellow, and I mention the incident only to indicate the unreasonableness that prevailed.

• 468 The Refinery Management kept their heads and showed good sense, as did some of the leading members of the Aden Trades Union Congress, several of whom worked indefatiguably to end the strikes. Without their help and understanding things would have been very much worse. As it was, normal conditions at the Refinery were restored in a comparatively short space of time, and then the pieces all fell into place again and the strikes were over, except in one or two cases where one side or the other was particularly stupid and unyielding.

625 In my opinion it was the Civil and Military security forces who came best out of this sorry affair. They were firm at the right time and lenient at the right time and their patience was admirable at all times. It was due to them that the situation did not become very much worse. It is only right that I should say so and that they should receive a few halfpence when they deserve them—they get enough kicks when they don't.

468 I ordered a Commission to be set up to inquire into the
466 cause of the strikes and to make recommendations for the

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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future. The Commission was composed of the Attorney-General who presided, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, a European both knowledgeable and far-sighted, two influential Arab members of the Legislative Council, a Trade Union official from the only Union that did not take any part in the strikes, and Mr. James Young, the well-known British Trade Unionist, who was selected by the Trades Union Congress in London in response to a request from us, and who flew out to Aden. Aden owes a considerable debt of gratitude to Mr. Young. The verdict of the Commission was that the strikes were basically industrial in origin but that one political party had done their utmost to exploit them for their own purposes.

The young Trades Union must learn to keep politics in their proper place which, in my view, should be outside the Union, and at the same time to be more responsible in their words and deeds. The employers must be more patient and more adaptable to the changing world about them. Patience, sympathy and common sense is the right mixture for both sides and should be prescribed in large doses. If it is taken regularly there will not be any serious labour trouble in Aden.

5:Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1947) 1949 MM1 Aden MMI

Utilities and Petrol

435 Electric light, 5 as. per unit.
Water, 4 as. per 100 gallons.
Petrol, Rs. 1.6.0 per gallon.

Rents are high and accommodation scarce. Board in an inferior hotel costs about Rs. 10 per day.

466 In the absence of a specialised Labour Department, the District [467 Commissioner investigates such complaints as are brought to his notice. 468] There are no trade unions. Three strikes were reported and in each case settled by raising the wages of the employees to bring them into closer relation with the rising cost of living.

The following is the more important labour legislation in force in the Colony in December, 1947.

Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Ordinance (*No.* 20 *of* 1938)

This prohibits the employment of children under 15 years of age, and the employment of women or young persons between 15 and 18 years of age on night work or in specified occupations.

Factories Ordinance (*No.* 21 *of* 1938)

This provides for the health and safety of persons working in factories, their hours, holidays and overtime pay, and provides for the appointment of factory inspectors.

Workmen's Compensation Ordinance (*No.* 40 *of* 1939)

This provides for the free medical treatment of workmen and their compensation in the event of injury causing loss of employment or death.

Minimum Wage and Wages Regulation Ordinance (*No.* 17 *of* 1940)

This provides for fixing the minimum wages to be paid in any occupation.

Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Ordinance (*No.* 23 *of* 1942)

This legalises trade unions and makes provision for their registration and the audit of their accounts. The English law as regards "intimidation" is followed.

Contracts of Employment (*Indigenous Workers*) *Ordinance* (*No.* 45 *of* 1942)

This provides for the employment of natives of Asia or Africa and requires contracts of employment for periods over six months to be in writing and approved by an authorised officer. It provides for the repatriation of employees working in other territories.

Labour Ordinance (*No.* 6 *of* 1943)

This regulates contracts of employment, requires contracts in writing to be approved by the District Commissioner, and makes provision for deeds of apprenticeship.

There is no old age pension scheme in Aden, but small grants from a Poor Relief Fund are made to the aged destitute.

6:Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1948) 1950 MM1 Aden MM1

433 of imported thread into cloth or dyeing and printing of imported cloth for the local market, the crushing of sesame seeds for cooking oil, the manufacture of cigarettes and the fashioning (without the potter's wheel) 463 of crude earthenware jars for storing water. At a rough estimate 5,000 men are employed in the port, 1,000 men and 200 women in the entrepôt industries, 500 men in salt manufacture and 100–200 in each of the other industries mentioned. There are, of course, numerous minor industries —garages, tailors, bakeries, production of electric light and water (Government owned), cinemas and a host of trades carried on by persons who range from substantial importers of grain to sellers of water by the 464 glass in the streets. The number of these traders is greatly in excess of 167 the real needs of the town, owing partly to the shifting nature of the population and to the chronic under-employment and poverty.

511 Wages of unskilled labour in Aden are low, partly on account of the very low standard of efficiency which is the result of malnutrition, lack of 465 education and an enervating climate, and partly to the pressure of the surplus labour from the Yemen, so close at hand.

465 During the year there was constant pressure to increase rates of wages, not because of any increase in the cost of living (which fell slightly as 467 Japanese cloth at cheaper prices became available), but because of greater organisation among the employees of the three big companies who service 468 the port, and very largely because Government employees received substantial payments in anticipation of arrears of salary from 1st January, 1946, following the visit of a Commission of Enquiry. These interim awards to Government staff were immediately followed by demands for similar bonus payments from commercial employees, backed up by strikes or the threat of strikes, and these demands were generally conceded.

468 A strike of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company's labour in November affected the port; a few ships were oiled direct from tankers or by the 504 services of office staff, but some shipping had to be diverted to other ports. The coal and other port labour joined the strike. The strikers refused Government arbitration, and after three weeks the employers conceded the majority of the men's demands.

465 A Labour Advisory Board, on which the Government, Port Trust and other substantial employers of labour are represented, has fixed the 464 minimum rate for unskilled labour at Rs. 1.6.0 (2*s.* 2*d.*) a day, and this rate is now paid by the big firms, but casual labourers who work for Arab or other small employers, do not achieve anything like this sum, even when in regular employment, and the monthly earnings of most men are greatly reduced by irregular employment.

Skilled tradesmen are insufficient for the requirements of Aden and so can command relatively good pay—up to Rs. 100 a month (£7 10*s.*) or more. There is also competition for skilled tradesmen from the oil-fields of the Persian Gulf, where high wages are being offered.

435 Commodity prices have not varied much during the year and the following are approximate figures for December, 1948 (price control is effective for such staple articles of diet as flour, rice and sugar):

7: Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1949-50) 1951 MM1 Aden mm1

874 will soon be available as well as the full-time course for younger students.

465 Wages remained stable throughout 1950, but towards the end of the year some increases were reported by employers in the building trade. The legal minimum wages remain as fixed by Regulation in April, 1949. There are probably some employers who still pay less than the required [435] minimum to unskilled labourers, usually immigrants from the Yemen. A comparative table of prices of a few commodities (*see* p. 11) indicate a fairly general rise in prices, and it is to be expected that in the near future there may be a general demand for increased wages.

466 Efforts have been made throughout the year to create better industrial relations by personal contact, visits and inspections of all 468 places of work, and by some talks, posters, and leaflets. There are no trade unions in the Colony, and the workpeople have no conception of organisation or collective bargaining. Trade stoppages reported during 1950 numbered five, and about 2,000 working days were lost. The disputes were in all cases of a purely local nature involving one concern and its employees. All were ended by agreement and conciliation. In no cases was the Trade Disputes Ordinance invoked.

466 The only labour legislation introduced was an amendment to the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance requiring compulsory notice of certain non-fatal accidents. This became law on 31st December, 1950, and the effect cannot yet be judged. The Labour Officer, the Principal of the Government Technical College and the District Commissioner are Factory Inspectors for the Colony. During the year, 102 inspections were made of factories registered under the requirements of the Ordinance. The main objects of these visits were to educate employers and works managers in the requirements of the Ordinance, and to suggest the use of guards for the more dangerous machinery. An attempt to organise first-aid classes for foreman and workers had to be abandoned owing to complete lack of support.

745 There are no Government schemes either contributory or otherwise for sick pay, unemployment relief, or old age pensions for the ordinary worker. Apart from the provisions made by Government and the Aden Port Trust for its employees, only four commercial concerns are known to have contributory schemes for employee gratuities. Scarcely half of the employees who could benefit from these schemes have so far become contributors. A number of the larger and old established firms provide some medical services, and at their discretion give gratuities to long service employees.

647 Towards the end of 1950 the Labour Advisory Board was freshly constituted. In the absence of any workers' organisations, special effort was made to nominate some non-employers on the Board. This Board should be a most useful body which will continuously have under examination all labour problems in the Colony.

8:Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1951-52)1954 MM1 Aden MM1

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS, 1952

	Number	Amount of Compensation
466 692 *Fatal Accident Cases* :		
Claimed and settled in Court	5	Sh. 17,584
Pending	4	—
No claim by dependents	7	—
Permanent Partial Disability Cases :		
Settled in Court	17	20,453
Settled out of Court	27	14,879
Closed without award (no permanent injury and other reasons)	101	—
Pending	43	—

Classification by Trades

Accidents on wharfs, on lighters, etc.	85
„ in factories and workshops	63
„ on buildings under construction	56

● 468 INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, 1952

Types of employment	*Date*	*Period of Stoppage*	*Number of men*	*Man days lost*
Factory	January	8 days	144	1,152
Dock Labour	February	2 „	500	1,000
Factory	March	2 „	50	100
Factory	May	1 day	50	50
Dock Labour	June	3 hours	250	90
Dock Labour	October	3 days	150	450
Building Construction	October	3 „	50	150
Building Construction	December	1 day	24	24
		TOTAL		3,016

Chapter 3 : Public Finance and Taxation

651 STATEMENT OF REVENUE FOR 1949-50 TO 1951-52

	1951-52 £	1950-51 £	1949-50 £
1. Direct Taxation	702,716	418,607	316,351
2. Customs and Excise	295,206	246,179	215,012
3. Stamps, Licences, etc.	43,871	47,275	41,374
4. Receipt for or in aid of specific Government Services	129,899	44,854	38,230
5. Contributions and Local Reimbursements	27,372	20,784	15,931

8:Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1951-52)1954 MM1 Aden MM1

651 The Tobacco Tax (Amendment) Ordinance (No. 16 of 1951), which allowed a draw-back of tax in the case of export of tobacco by air as well as by sea, defined more clearly the meaning of importation and removed any doubt that it is an offence for any person to deal in tobacco issued to Her Majesty's Forces at duty-free or reduced duty rates.

494 The Motor Traffic (Amendment) Ordinance (No. 17 of 1951), which empowered the licensing authority to suspend the registration of a motor vehicle until any defects in such vehicle are satisfactorily remedied. It also made provision for a fixed date for the expiration and renewal of driving licences.

657 The Pensions (Amendment) (No. 2) Ordinance (No. 19 of 1951), which extended the present option of officials to retire or be retired at the age of 45 years for a further period of three years until 31st March, 1955.

651 The Stamp Duty (Amendment) (No. 2) Ordinance (No. 20 of 1951), which exempted from stamp duty receipts given in respect of sums of money exceeding *Shs.*30 paid by way of salary, wages, pensions or allowances. This exception applies to members of Her Majesty's Forces as well as to persons in civilian employment.

1952

In 1952, 23 Ordinances were enacted of which the following were the more important :

The Income Tax (Amendment) Ordinance (No. 1 of 1952), which granted additional relief in respect of expenses incurred by a tax-payer in sending a child to school or other training establishment outside the Colony, where no suitable educational institution exists in the Colony.

453 The Banking Ordinance (No. 2 of 1952), which is designed to control the establishment and operation of banks in the Colony. It is a measure intended to protect the public from persons carrying on banking business with inadequate financial resources or of whose financial reliability there may be reasonable doubt.

468 The Essential Services (Arbitration) Ordinance (No. 4 of 1952), which provided safeguards against the dangers which might arise to the life and health of the community if certain essential services were interrupted. Such services include the provision of water and electricity, health services, etc. It provided that reference of trade disputes in essential services should be made to an Arbitration Tribunal, whose decision would be binding on both employers and employees, and also that lockouts by employers in such services and strikes by their employees were an offence.

This Ordinance is binding on the Crown as there are essential services in the Colony operated by the Government or by Her Majesty's Forces.

The Ordinance has not yet been brought into operation.

687 The Prevention of Corruption Ordinance (No. 5 of 1952), which introduced more effective measures to combat bribery and corruption.

494 The Motor Vehicles Insurance (Third Party Risks) Ordinance (No. 7 of 1952), which introduced compulsory insurance of motor vehicles in